



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

My Note Book.

LONDON, June 10, 1882.



ALK of doctors disagreeing! Compared with the London critics, they are the embodiment of harmony. Take as an example their opinions as to the merits of the Royal Academy Exhibition. The Daily News says: "Very satisfactory; the average level of work is unusually high." "Below the average," says The Athenæum. "Decidedly above the average," says The Pall Mall Gazette. "It is a weak exhibition, probably the weakest that has been seen at the Royal Academy within living memory," says The Post. "The exhibition impresses us in the main as a decidedly strong one," says The Builder; and so on. In my own humble judgment, there are very many inferior pictures; a few that are very good, and one or two that are almost great.

* * *

AS is often the case in our New York Academy exhibitions, the worst pictures are contributed by Academicians. But in this instance, it must be admitted, so also are the best. The "Phryne," by Sir Frederick Leighton, makes everything in its neighborhood appear insignificant. It is superb in drawing, and despite the much criticised yellowness of the flesh, intended to represent the gilding by the sun, it is veritably a poem of color. The picture consists of this single figure, almost nude, of a dark-skinned young woman, with rich auburn hair through which she is passing one hand as she stands in statuesque beauty before her judges. Well might they waver before such a Phryne. There is not a particle of soul in the firm-set, resolute face. Such, no doubt, was the purpose of the artist; but there is a grandeur in the pose and a nobility in the physique of this wonderful creation which make one wish that the President of the Academy had associated them with a somewhat more worthy subject.

* * *

A FAITHFUL imitator of Sir Frederick—and there are many of them in the Royal Academy this year—is Frank Dicksee, who sends a decidedly "sensational" picture—"A Love Story"—a maiden seated by her swain in the moonlight, listening to him, apparently, with rapt interest, although in truth she seems rather bored. A sickly green lime-light effect is thrown over the scene, as different from nature as could be well imagined. The picture is clever in technique, feeble in sentiment, and one of the most popular in the exhibition.

* * *

OF the same enervated school is Mr. Albert Moore's "Dreamers," and in technique perhaps it is even cleverer. Several limp decorative maidens, all attired in diaphanous white and primrose drapery of classic cut, loll in a row, with more or less grace. The picture is painted in a very low key, the highest note of which is found in the salmon-hued embroidery on the back of the bench. As a study of color and of the slightly contrasting lines of drapery with the curves of the human figure, it is certainly interesting; but to the general visitor it will probably suggest nothing so much as the apprehension that these over-fed damsels will awaken presently with very severe headaches.

* * *

AGAIN the influence of Sir Frederick Leighton is seen in Mr. C. E. Perugini's "Dolce Far Niente." Once more, decorative lines and drapery! Two maidens on a terrace lazily watching the movements of a snail. But they are at least awake, and for this one feels grateful to the artist.

* * *

THERE are so few examples of emotional painting in the exhibition that the half a dozen or so that there are attract a good deal of attention. Prominent among them is Mr. J. Pettie's "The Duke of Monmouth's Interview with James II.," which is truly a powerful work. The wretched man, with blanched face and bloodshot eyes, his arms pinioned behind him, grovels on the floor at the feet of his heartless kinsman, who with folded arms and cruel sneer, complaisantly regards the helpless victim. The technique of this moving picture is almost faultless. Hardly less powerful, although not so well painted, is W. F. Yeames' "Prince Arthur and Hubert," which represents the ill-fated boy,

with pallid cheek and eyes swollen with weeping, pleading for his life. Hubert, you can see, is affected by the prayers of the child, but he resolutely sets his face, and it is evident that he will show no mercy.

* * *

THERE are many battle pieces, but only two are really strong—"A Pause in the Attack," by E. Crofts, and "Saving the Guns," by Mr. Caton Woodville. I should have written the latter name first. The painting is not good in color—Mr. Woodville's pictures seldom are—but it is full of movement. There is probably no Englishman who comes so near to the great French battle painters of the day. The scene portrayed is an incident at Maiwand, in the late Afghan campaign. There is all the bustle and excitement of battle—the eager soldiery, the snorting horses doing their best to respond to their masters' call; the dust, the smoke, the dying and the dead. All are vividly before you. As you look at the canvas you seem to see the troopers actually pass as they scurry across the plain, straining every nerve to avert the dreaded disgrace of letting the artillery fall into the hands of the enemy. It is a stirring picture, terrible in its realism, and certainly one of the best in the exhibition.

* * *

MR. CROFTS' battle piece shows some English soldiers cautiously venturing out of the farm-house at Hougoumont, on the eve of Waterloo. The foe are not in sight; but the evidence of their neighborhood is seen in the dead and wounded. One dying Frenchman is being succored by an English drummer-boy, who is giving him drink from his canteen. The color is good and well distributed, but there is nothing like the spirit and the concentration of effect in this picture that make Mr. Woodville's "Saving the Guns" so striking.

* * *

"FLOREAT ETONA," by Mrs. Elizabeth Butler, an incident of the Zulu war, is a very tame affair, and taken in connection with her "Defence of Rorke's Drift" last year, ought to satisfy even the loyal British public that something more than the approval of the Prince of Wales is necessary to make this lady a successful painter of battle scenes. Since she produced "The Roll Call," which made her fame, she has done nothing to entitle her to distinction. Her drawing, as a rule, is excellent, but her coloring is absolutely bad. Her deficiencies in this respect were not so apparent in "The Roll Call," which is a gray picture painted in a low key; but when Mrs. Butler deals with strong color, her shortcomings are but too apparent. The composition, moreover, of "Floreat Etona" is poor, although it contains but two figures; and it is theatrical without being at all dramatic. The incident depicted is interesting enough. It is thus described by an eye-witness of the attack on Laing's Neck: "Poor Elwes fell among the 58th. He shouted to another Eton boy (Adjutant of the 58th, whose horse had been shot), 'Come along, Monck! Floreat Etona! We must be in the front rank!' And he was shot immediately."

* * *

IN landscape painting, the English boast, not without reason, that their artists are unsurpassed by those of any country in the world. It must be admitted, however, that the present exhibition would hardly in itself sustain such a claim, although it contains some excellent work in this direction. Vicat Cole has two fine studies from nature, called "Abingdon" and "Sylvan Solitude;" Cecil Lawson's "Blackdown, Surrey," a bleak scene of a heather-clad moor, is vigorously painted, and in color reminds one of "old Crome" at his best; A. W. Hunt sends a delicious bit of placid nature in his "Sonning About Mid-day," although the hanging committee, for some reason or want of one, has seen fit to place it in an obscure position; and John Brett contributes a remarkable scene on the sea-shore, called "The Gray of the Morning." This latter is certainly the most brilliant example of chromatic photography I have ever seen. There is indeed little attempt at a picture, so far as composition is concerned. It is as if the artist had transfixed on canvas, in a fleeting moment, the miniature reflection we see produced sometimes by the camera obscura. The rock with its blue mosses so naturally in relief that persons go up to the picture to satisfy themselves that there is no trick about it; the waves, so limpid as they roll into the little cove, that one seems to see them lapping the sand hills—all is a literal transcript of nature during a flash of

sunshine. That this literalism is the highest kind of art I do not believe. But that this picture nevertheless is very beautiful cannot be denied.

* * *

WHAT could our minister to England have been thinking about, I wonder, to allow himself to be painted by Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt in scarlet robes, for all the world like some cheap London civic potentate? It is thus "His Excellency, the Hon. J. R. Lowell," appears at the Royal Academy; and he looks out of his frame with an expression of easy dignity as if all this gorgeousness were only the every-day costume of a citizen of the Republic.

* * *

"THE FUNERAL OF A MUMMY," one of F. A. Bridgman's Salon pictures, was one of the best of its class in the Royal Academy last year. This time he sends his well-known "Interior at Biskra"—Algerian women weaving the burnous. W. J. Hennessy sends his "En Fête, Calvados," shown last year at the Philadelphia Exhibition of the works of American artists abroad, and illustrated in THE ART AMATEUR. At the Grosvenor he has a charming landscape he calls "Winter, Calvados;" a French peasant has climbed a young tree and is lopping off some of the branches. The sky is bright and blue and the air cold and crisp. Mark Fisher, one of our best American artists abroad, sends a single canvas to the Royal Academy, "Sunlight and Shade," and three to the Grosvenor Gallery, "Evening," "A Cloudy Day," and "Early Summer."

* * *

WHISTLER has no less than seven of his whimsicalities at the Grosvenor: "Nocturne in Blue and Silver"—a lake view by moonlight—with pale gilt frame, touched up with blue, to match; "Harmony in Flesh-Color and Pink" (portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux); "Scherzo in Blue" ("The Blue Girl"); "Nocturne in Black and Gold" (Entrance to Southampton Water); "Harmony in Black and Red"—a full size portrait of a ghastly young lady all in black, except the red feather in her hat and the red braid around her neck holding a charm; and two daubs entitled a "Note in Blue and Opal" (Jersey) and "Blue and Brown" (San Brelade's Bay).

* * *

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY indeed fully sustains its reputation as the refuge for the queerly unconventional in art. Mr. Whistler's funny "harmonies and arrangements" are quite at home there, and could not by any chance be mistaken for Royal Academy productions; but our American eccentric, it must be confessed, does not begin to interest the public with his artistic aberrations as does Mr. Burne Jones with his. Here is the principal work of the latter painter: "The Tree of Forgiveness." It tells the old Greek story of Phyllis and her lover Demophoon. You will remember the maiden killed herself for love when she thought the young man had deserted her, and it was a mistake after all. The gods changed her into an almond tree, and here you have her in graceful nudity, springing out of the trunk into the arms of her lover. Both figures are life size. The almond tree is in full blossom, the pretty flowers filling the upper part of the picture, the ground being carpeted with the amaranth and blue blossoms. The drawing in parts is very faulty, especially in the figure of Demophoon, who has a ridiculously small and effeminate head and the legs of a prize-fighter. The flesh-tints in both figures are of the sienna hue seen in old Majolica ware.

* * *

MR. BURNE JONES' picture of "The Mill" is a very odd imitation of Botticelli. It shows three young women in classic drapery dancing lugubriously to the piping of a fourth damsel, also draped; while in the background are seen several men bathing. Why the damsels should have selected such a spot and such a time for their saltatory diversions it is hard to divine. The work is carefully executed and excellent in tone; but it is exasperating in its slavish imitation of obsolete methods in technique and composition.

* * *

MR. G. H. BOUGHTON does us much credit this year. He is well represented both at the Academy and the Grosvenor. At the former he has four pictures and at the latter two. He is gradually weaning himself from his Puritan maidens; although, I cannot

help thinking that his "Burgomaster's Daughter," at the Academy, is no other than his "Hester Prynne" of last year, masquerading in the costume of a Dutch maiden. With the exception of a portrait in the Grosvenor of a lady—who forms a pretty centre for a really charming study of greens, in which the artist runs the whole gamut of his favorite color—and a view of "St. Ives Bay, Cornwall," in the Academy, all his pictures this year are Dutch in subject. Mr. Boughton evidently has no idea of forsaking his favorite greens, or salmon pink either. The Pall Mall Gazette truly remarked recently that "his pictures look like nature seen through a piece of a bottle." His "Burgomaster's Daughter" certainly has too much green in the carnations, and the face is flat; but, apart from these defects, it is a good picture. The skating costume is quaint and picturesque, and carried out in thinner materials than represented in the painting would be capital for ladies at a fancy-dress ball.

* * *

ALMA-TADEMA, who has nothing in the Royal Academy, has five unimportant works in the Grosvenor—a portrait of "Ludwig Barnay as Marc Antony" and one of "Hans Richter;" "Early Affections," a child playing with a doll in a Roman garden, bright with flowers and sunshine; "A Torch Dance," a dancing girl in a leopard's skin, not standing on one foot and pretending to dance, as so many of Mr. Alma-Tadema's girls do, but capering wildly, torch in hand, to the piping of three musicians, who are just visible through the partly-opened doors; and "An Audience," consisting of the profiles of three young women, more comely than the artist generally makes his women.

* * *

THAT really great English painter, J. E. Millais, evidently is working more for money than fame. Some of his portraits are dashed off without attempt at completion. It will be remembered that he used to be a pre-Raphaelite of the pre-Raphaelites. Perhaps he would be so still if he could execute all the commissions he gets. But he knows the money value of his name and he turns out such a canvas as his "portrait of Mrs. G. Whilby," finishing it only in parts, like "the work begun" in a piece of ladies' needlework, to show what he could do if he had time. Very different is his "Children of Mrs. Barrett," admirable in every respect and finished in his old conscientious way. It is by such a masterpiece of portraiture as this, with which every now and then he delights the public, that he maintains his reputation as the first painter of children in England, and, it might be added, indeed, in the world. Remembering his early performances, one knows that he could, if he chose, be more than a portraitist; but he seems contented to follow this branch of his art, and probably he knows his own business best.

* * *

AT the Fine Art Society's rooms in New Bond Street, there is exhibited a picture by Millais called "Cäler Herrin." It is the very same child he has painted again and again under different names; only this time she is clad as a fisher maiden. She is certainly very pretty. I am told that she is the daughter of Mr. Buckstone, the actor, and is a great pet of the artist. Twenty-five hundred guineas is the modest price asked by the dealer for this fancy portrait; and that does not include the engraving copyright.

* * *

THE most notable pictures in London at present are to be found neither at the Royal Academy nor the Grosvenor Gallery. They are chiefly works of Parisian artists and are scattered about the neighborhood of Bond and Regent streets. You pay a dealer in King street a fee of one shilling to see Rosa Bonheur's latest portrayal of animal life, "The Lion at Home"; another shilling invested in Conduit street reveals to you the grandeur of Munkacsy's "Christ before Pilate"; for a third in Bond street you may see De Neuville's "The Cemetery of St. Privat"; a Doré exhibition will open its gates for another shilling; and any number of small-fry dealers will disclose to the admiring gaze of an art-hungry public their unapproachable treasures for a repetition of the same silver token.

* * *

"THE CEMETERY OF ST. PRIVAT" is the pendant of "The Bourget" in William H. Vanderbilt's col-

lection. It is certainly a masterly work; but too horrible for a private gallery. The scene represents the termination of the desperate resistance of ten thousand Frenchmen who were almost exterminated by the attack of six times that number of Germans, including the famous guard of the Emperor William. The enemy are pouring into the churchyard on all sides, but encounter hardly anything but the corpses which block their way. A field officer, entering by the shattered door, discharges his pistol at one of the few soldiers remaining alive. Against the wall a few disabled men calmly await their fate. On some of the tombstones are still hanging undisturbed the floral offerings made by the villagers, perhaps only the day before—a suggestion of peace and quiet which jars harshly with the present awful scene of slaughter. In the distance, the victorious Prussians are seen swarming in, mowing down all opposition. In depicting the horrors of war De Neuville has done nothing to surpass this powerful picture.

* * *

AT the same gallery are to be seen two smaller pictures by this great French battle painter, recording this time a deed of British valor, "Saving the Queen's Colors at Isandula" and its sequel "The Last Sleep of the Brave." It will be remembered that when all was lost, save honor, on the bloody field of Isandula, Lieutenants Melville and Coghill were summoned in hot haste and entrusted with the perilous mission of bearing the colors to a place of safety. The first picture represents these young Englishmen cutting their way through the Zulus. One gigantic chief, rushing forward with a yell to wrest the flag from Melville, is shot through the body, while another receives his "coup de grace" from Coghill's sabre. The other picture shows both of the young officers dead on the field, but at a distance from the enemy. The beloved colors are firm in their death-grasp, as if the responsibility of their trust was the last thought of each. One of the heroes must have lost his charger in the flight; for only one horse is seen—stark and stiff, and, like his master, covered with wounds. A troop of British cavalymen is coming up. The officer in command has already dismounted, and stands with solemn face and uncovered head beside his dead comrades. A lancer, too, is saluting. One trooper, in the middle distance, sees what has happened and is turning in his saddle to impose silence on the rest of the company. Small chromolithographs have been printed of all three of these new pictures of De Neuville; but I need hardly say they are poor substitutes for the originals. It is probable, however, that the pictures will all be engraved.

* * *

MR. THOMAS HOLLOWAY, the patent-medicine man, under the name of "Mr. Martin," recently repeated at "Christie's" his sensational performance of last year as a picture-buyer. At the Coleman sale, it will be remembered, he secured, under the name of "Mr. Thomas," four superb Landseers, two of Stanfield's best works, and Millais' famous "Princes in the Tower," for which he paid about \$152,000. All were pictures of the highest order of merit. Connoisseurs bid in vain against the invincible pill and ointment man; but were somewhat relieved to find that the pictures were bought for the decoration of a charitable institution he was founding, and so were not entirely lost to the public.

* * *

THIS time Mr. Holloway does not seem to have bought with such good judgment. He gave 6300 guineas (about \$33,000) for "The Babylonian Marriage Market," by E. Long, the Royal Academician, who originally was paid for it about a fifth of that sum. A few years ago it was offered by a print-seller in Liverpool to the Art Committee of the Corporation for £3000. I have not seen the picture. Probably it is very fine—it is at least very large, its dimensions being 66 inches by 120—but it is not easy to understand how the painter of such a lifeless thing as "Why Tarry the Wheels of his Chariot?" in this year's Academy could produce a work worth even the last named sum.

* * *

It is hardly likely that if Mr. Holloway should desire to sell his picture he would get the price he paid for it. A great connoisseur like Mr. Ruskin, on the other hand, in buying pictures rarely makes a mistake. At all events he did not go far wrong when a few years ago he paid Mr. Henry Wallis 1000 guineas for the picture of "Napoleon I. in the Campaign of Paris,"

painted in 1862 by Meissonier; for it was sold back to the original owner at "Christie's" last week for £6080. As the canvas measures twelve inches by nine, the cost was £56 a square inch. If Mr. Holloway bought his picture by Long by the inch, he got, relatively of course, a great bargain.

* * *

"TAPESTRY PAINTING" has been much simplified by the new process of M. Barthelemy Grénié, a French artist, who has an attractive exhibition of works of his own in a New Bond Street gallery, to see which the regulation admission fee of one shilling is charged. By his method, which is as simple as water-color drawing, the prepared canvas (now made very fine and silky) may be readily painted so as to resemble the ancient hangings of Gobelins or Arras. The dyes used are absolutely indelible and as brilliant as oil colors. Amateurs who paint on silk and velvet will be pleased to know that the colors can be used for such work without the aid of Chinese white or any of the troublesome preparations now employed, and that once put on no amount of washing or scrubbing will deface them. It is to be hoped that some one will see the advantage of introducing them into the United States.

* * *

WHILE visiting the studio of M. Grénié I noticed that the acid in the colors is so strong that the porcelain vessels containing them soon become thoroughly impregnated with the dyes, so that they show very plainly under the glaze. It occurred to me that under proper treatment, this peculiarity ought to make them valuable for ceramic painting. The idea seemed to impress the inventor favorably, and he will probably make some experiments in this direction.

* * *

THE exhibition gallery is hung with many large "painted tapestry" copies of famous pictures by M. Grénié, admirably executed. In one of the rooms upstairs are two large tapestry panels of mythological subjects, beautifully painted by Mrs. Henry McDowell, wife of the managing director. They were copied from the original Gobelins at Buckingham Palace, by the permission of the Queen, and are so skilfully done it would almost take an expert to determine that they are not real tapestry.

* * *

"ACADEMY QUADRILLES," which means dances in which the ladies dress in fancy costumes after paintings in the Academy, are a novelty in London which might be adopted in New York next winter, under unusual advantages. It has been decided that we are to have a fall exhibition of paintings; so that the costume models will be all ready for the gay season. The genre painters and portraitists will, of course, bear this in mind, remembering that if they are to enjoy the suffrages of the belles of Manhattan they must spare no pains in composing such picturesque costumes as in the Royal Academy are now the joy of the London ball-rooms.

* * *

THE Howell & James annual exhibition of paintings on china by amateur and professional artists shows an improvement on that of last year. Not so many works are hung, but the average quality is certainly better. They are nearly all pictures, however—not decorations as they should be. In two of the galleries, on centre-tables, there is an attractive array of vases of various shapes and proportions, relieving the monotony of the plates and plaques which cover the walls. When my eye fell upon them, I exclaimed: "Good! at last we have the much-needed change;" for the decorations were of a high order of merit. To my disappointment, closer inspection showed that the pieces on one table were all from the Doulton works, and those on the other were contributed by an importer of barbotine ware. An encouraging placard informed the visitor that lessons were given in this latter kind of decoration—faience underglaze. It is nothing more nor less than our "Limoges" painting. An invoice of the productions of our New York Volkmar and Cincinnati McLaughlins would make a "sensation" here. But, for some reason that I cannot fathom, Howell & James will not exhibit amateur work of this kind. One explanation given was that suitable pieces could not be had for decoration, and another was that such objects were too troublesome to handle. But neither of these is quite reasonable.

MONTEZUMA.